

SOUTH YORKSHIRE TRANSPORT USERS GROUP

THURSDAY 16 JANUARY 2020

PRESENT:

J. Hoare	(Chair)
N. Spetch	(Vice Chair/Rotherham TUG)
J. Brightmore	(Sheffield TUG/Ramblers)
D Wrottesley	(Hope Valley Rail User Group)
I. Jenkinson	(Sheffield TUG/Member of the Public)
M. Payling	(Chair of DTUG)
M Turner	
M Wilson	(Sheffield TUG)

GUESTS:

F Johnson	(Stagecoach)
P Cobb	(TM Travel)
D Leech	(Cllr Barnsley)
R. Cowling	(SYPTTE)
T Taylor	(SYPTTE)
M Farmer	(SYPTTE)
C. Whittaker	(SYPTTE)
J Holmes	(SCR)

APOLOGIES:

Alex Bray and Peter Walch

1. ELECTION AND CHAIR

The election of Chair and Vice-chair took place. M Payling nominated the current holders, John Hoare and Nigel Spetch to continue in the roles, this was seconded by I Jenkinson.

2. OPEN AND WELCOME

The meeting was opened and a round table of introductions was held.

J Brightmore informed the group that John Whittington, SYTUG member, had recently passed away. The group asked for condolences to be passed on.

JH asked if all Districts were represented at the meeting and it was confirmed that they were.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Alex Bray and Peter Walch.

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 18 JULY 2019

DW raised an issue regarding budgets and whether there was enough money available? TT explained in full regarding planned reserves.

Devolution Funding was agreed to be put on the forward plan for discussion in July.

NS noted that despite issues being raised re signage and additional ticket machines at Kiveton Park, the situation remained the same. This would be fed back to Northern as no rail operator present at the meeting.

MF confirmed that the design plans for lengthening platforms between Penistone and Leeds have been revised by Network Rail to accommodate the longer modified Sprinters. Work on the ground has been delayed due to the plan revision but should have now commenced. Platforms between Penistone and Sheffield are already long enough to accommodate the longer trains.

The Chair and group then agreed the minutes as an accurate record.

5. FORWARD PLANNER

TT gave an overview of the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) and JH handed out copies of the IRP report.

JB asked why SCT are not pushing for the Woodhead line to be reopened as it is the only other alternative route between Sheffield and Manchester?

MF advised there are no current plans to reopen this line and that there is an alternative route between Sheffield and Manchester via Huddersfield. TPE made use of this alternative route to continue to run Sheffield – Manchester services when the Hope Valley line was blocked with the risk of the dam bursting. TPE has committed to using this route as a contingency during any future disruption.

IJ noted that 40 minutes to travel to Manchester seemed excessive for travelling just 26 miles and felt it needed to be looked into. MF advised Transport for the North (TfN) are currently investigating journey time improvements across the network and the Hope Valley line is included in this.

As part of the Hope Valley Capacity Upgrade scheme, Network Rail also intend to look into Sprinter differentials along this route. Note however, the Hope Valley Capacity Upgrade Scheme is not aimed at improving journey times on this route. The Scheme aim is to improve reliability and to run a potential 3rd fast train per hour.

JH asked what WILL be delivered in the near future (i.e. 5 years). TT referred all to Map 1 on Pages 24-25 of the IRP for further details on this.

DW raised concerns regarding a 3rd express service at Dore as there is restricted infrastructure. MF confirmed one of aims of Hope Valley Capacity Upgrade Scheme is the delivery of a 3rd fast train and discussions are currently taking place between TfN, Department for Transport (DfT) and the Train Operators as to how this 3rd path could be delivered. Additional calls at intermediate stops such as Dore & Totley will be part of these discussions. The infrastructure at Dore is restricted by the current length of the existing platform. However, some existing TPE trains (6 cars) do already call at Dore and Totley and although 6 cars are too long for the platform, selective door opening is used to allow passengers to join and alight the train.

JH said it was imperative that a Senior Network Rail representative attends the next meeting to answer the numerous questions being raised.

6. **BUS**

a) Bus Operator Updates

Stagecoach

- FJ confirmed that Stagecoach had sent representatives to all the User Groups held recently so all suitably briefed on current events and fares increase. FJ explained that the fares/tickets had been changed to make it simpler and easier to choose a ticket, unfortunately this did mean a small increase in some price.
- FJ asked the group to note that a change of Managing Director was taking place shortly, with Phil Medicott taking over the role in this area.

First

- The group noted disappointment that there was no representation from First at the meeting but IJ did state that Brandon Jones had attended STUG and had given an overview of the issues recently experienced.

N Spetch asked 'what is a school day'? and that Realtime Information is not correct with buses not arriving when says 'due'

DW raised concerns about the 11a which serviced the grounds of the Northern General Hospital and that the route had been rejected due to vehicles 'idling' in the grounds. TT confirmed the 11a does still serve the hospital but does not enter the grounds.

JB raised an issue over service 218 and that there had been some services missing in the afternoons. Could TM Travel look into this? PC, TM Travel, noted this and will look into the matter.

b) January Service Changes

TT confirmed that there will be some service changes from 25/26 January, not as significant as the September changes but seem to be well received so far.

c) First's Tap & Cap Pilot in Doncaster - Update

TT gave an update on the pilot scheme – currently performing well and has improved boarding times.

7. **TRAM**

a) Rail Replacement (2020 planning programme)

The works for 2020 are due to start in May and concentrate more on the South of Sheffield this year so will affect blue and purple tram services.

b) Tram -Train

Some technical issues with the vehicles have been causing problems lately but the majority of these are now resolved and talks are in progress with Stadler (manufacturer) on how to better manage any future issues.

8. **TRAIN**

There were no attendees from the operators, but MF was able to provide updates as follows:

a) Update from Train operators – pacer fleet removal in 2020 and new timetables

- MF confirmed Northern plan to remove Class 142 Pacers by February and Class 144 Pacers by May 2020. From 1st January 2020 all Pacers are non-Person with Restricted Mobility (PRM compliant), however Northern have been granted permission by DfT to run Pacers until Summer 2020. Late delivery of new rolling stock and subsequent delays to cascade

of existing rolling stock to our region to replace Pacers means it has been necessary for Pacers to be retained a bit longer. Keeping Pacers for longer is a better scenario than removing them and having to cancel a large number of services due to train shortages. MF also advised Northern have advised they have put in place additional accessibility support for customers on the routes where Pacers will continue to operate.

- MF advised that rail performance across the North has been unacceptably poor. Last year a call was made by Northern Leaders, including Sheffield City Region's Mayor, for Arriva to be stripped of the Northern Franchise. A decision is being made on 29 January by DfT as to whether they will be stripped of the franchise and replaced by a Operator of Last Resort (OLR) **Post meeting note:** On 29th January 2020 DfT awarded the Northern Franchise to OLR and Arriva will no longer run the Northern franchise. The implications of this for our region are being looked into by SYPTE's Rail team.
- MF thanked DW for raising his frustrations in a SYTUG meeting held in 2018 that she attended regarding Dore canopy. MF reminded the group that DW had stated Northern and TPE would not come together to progress the building of a bespoke new canopy to provide much needed additional shelter for passengers and this was very frustrating. MF advised after this meeting SYPTE helped bring the relevant parties together to discuss the scheme and agree joint funding of the canopy. In July 2019 the canopy build was completed and was officially opened by the Sheffield City Region's Mayor. MF stated this shows that issues and frustrations raised in forums such as SYTUG are taken on board and can influence making things happen.
- MF noted that if anyone has any 'rail-related' issues or concerns, they are welcome to email her directly at melissa.farmer@sypte.co.uk and she can action appropriately.

9. AIR QUALITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

TT suggested this was kept on the agenda for a future meeting.

10. MEMBERS ITEMS

R Cowling confirmed that no items had been received.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Leech announced that the Tour-de-Yorkshire was coming to South Yorkshire again this year (mainly Barnsley) on the dates of 30/4-2/5.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

23 April, 10.30am

DRAFT